

Thomas Jefferson to Wilson Cary Nocholas, December 6, 1804, Partial transcription , from The Works of Thomas Jefferson in Twelve Volumes. Federal Edition. Collected and Edited by Paul Leicester Ford.

TO WILSON CARY NICHOLAS J. MSS.

Washington, Dec. 6, 04.

Dear Sir, — * * * I thank you for your description of the state of parties. As to one of the extremes I find I have not been mistaken. The line between them and their more moderate brethren I have not so well understood. It is of importance for my government.

From the Federalists there I expect nothing on any principle of duty or patriotism: but I did suppose they would pay some attentions to the interests of Norfolk. Is it the interest of that place to strengthen the hue and cry against the policy of making the Eastern branch our great naval deposit? Is it their interest that this should be removed to New York or Boston to one of which it must go if it leaves this? Is it their interest to scout a defence by gunboats in which they would share amply, in hopes of a navy which will not be built in our day, & would be no defence if built, or of forts which will never be built or maintained, and would be no defence if built? Yet such are the objects which they patronize in their papers. This is worthy of more consideration than they seem to have given it. Accept affectionate salutations & assurances of great esteem & respect.